



FONTENELLE
FOREST

Fontenelle Forest Nature Center
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Wild About Winter

Pre- and Post-Trip Activity Suggestions PreK, K & 1st

Below are pre- and post-visit field trip activities that can be done either indoors or on your school grounds. We encourage you to give serious consideration to one or more of these -- they will enhance your class' field trip experience and are also a lot of fun! We look forward to your students' arrival and anticipate providing them with a fun and educational experience. If you have any questions, please call us at 402-731-3140.

**The following activities meet NE State Science Standards: SC 2.1.1, 2.2.1, 2.3.1.d, 2.3.4.a, & 2.4.3.c and
NE Language Arts Standards: LA 0.1.4, 0.1.5d, 0.1.6h, 0.3.1, 0.3.2**

Activity: Snowflake Mobiles

Suggested Timing: 30 minutes

Time: Pre-Trip

Location: Indoors

Materials: one or two foot long sticks, white paint, white scrap paper, thread, scissors

Procedure: Dab white paint along the top edge of stick to represent snow. Let dry. Fold a piece of scrap paper in half and then fold it in half again. Keeping the inner, folded corner as the center, fold again and possibly a fourth time. Cut designs in the paper, making sure to leave some paper between each cut. Unfold to see your snowflake. Create as many snowflakes as possible, then tie them to the stick using different lengths of thread.

Activity: What do you do for winter?

Suggested Timing: Post –trip (This activity works well with “Winter Tactics Storytime” found below)

Time: 20-30 minutes

Location: Outdoors or indoors

Materials: Whiteboard or chalkboard, large paper, different colored markers

Procedures: Have your students brainstorm about how they adapt to winter. Ask if any have Grandparents or neighbors who go to warmer climates for the winter (migrate). Do your students find they eat more in the fall and sleep more as the days get shorter? Do they wish they could hibernate? What are their favorite winter activities? What is their favorite snow activity? Sledding? Making Snow Angels? Building snow forts and having snowball fights? Make a bar chart with everyone's favorite winter activities on it. Which one is the most popular? How can your students become even more active during the winter?

Activity: Snowflaking

Suggested Timing: Post-trip

Time: 30 minutes

Location: Outdoors

Materials: Clear glass plate/tray that has been in the freezer, freshly falling snow, chilled aerosol hairspray (or spray acrylic)

Procedures: While it is snowing take your supplies outside: In a sheltered area apply a layer of hairspray to the glass plate or tray that has been in the freezer. Catch some snowflakes on the plate and then bring it indoors and allow the plate to dry for approximately 15 minutes. Once the plate is dry the snowflakes can be studied with a hand magnifying glass.

Activity: Jackwax (maple snow taffy)

Suggested Timing: Post-Trip

Time: 45 minutes

Location: Indoors or Outdoors

Materials: maple syrup (start with about 1/2 cup), candy thermometer, pot, stove, tray of clean snow

Procedure: Cook syrup over low heat, stirring constantly until temperature hits soft-ball candy stage on candy thermometer (234°F to 240°F). Immediately drizzle cooked syrup over tray of snow (or outside on clean snow). Syrup will harden almost immediately to taffy-like substance and can be picked up with fingers to be eaten.

Activity: Winter Tactics Storytime

Suggested Timing: Post-Trip

Time: 30-45 minutes

Location: Indoors

Materials: copies of the books

Procedure: Read the following stories to further illustrate the various tactics used by animals to survive winter:

For "staying active" read, Red Fox in Winter by Janet Craig, Scholastic Inc. ISBN 0-439-65214-6

For "migrate" read, Melody's Mystery by Diane Kelsay Harvey & Bob Harvey, A Little America Book, ISBN 0-89802-619-9

For "hibernate" read, Go To Sleep, Groundhog! By Judy Cox, Scholastic Inc. ISBN 0-439-73094-5

Activity: Snow gauge

Suggested Timing: Pre, or Post-Trip

Time: 20 minutes

Location: Outdoors and Indoors

Materials: clear plastic container, permanent marker, and ruler

Procedure: make sure the top of the container is open; mark the side, using the ruler, with inches or centimeters. Place the container outside to measure how much snow is collected. After noting how deep the snow is, bring the container inside and allow it to melt. Measure how deep the water is now. Are they the same? Is there more water than snow, or less water? Why might this be? A: Snow is actually comprised of large amounts of air, plus ice takes up more space than water does.

Activity: First Snowflake Chant

Suggested Timing: Pre-Trip or Post-Trip

Time: 10 minutes

Location: Indoors

Materials: snow!!

Chant: A snowflake falls this wintry day,
I welcome you and shout, "Hooray!"

Activity: Natural Bird Feeders

Materials:

- A. pinecones, suet or peanut butter, birdseed, string
- B. dried fruit (figs, apples, apricots, etc.), needle, floss
- C. full sunflowers, string

Procedure:

- A. Take a pinecone and spread suet or peanut butter on its sides. Roll it in birdseed and hang it on a tree branch (make sure there's a nearby perch for the birds).
- B. String dried fruit using a blunt needle and dental floss. Drape the garland on a tree.
- C. Hang dried sunflower heads upside-down. The birds will peck out the tasty seeds.

Activity: Suet Recipe

Suggested Timing: Post-Trip

Time: 45 minutes

Location: Indoors and Outdoors

Materials: flour, birdseed, corn meal, peanut butter, shortening

Procedure: Have the children mix up the following ingredients: 1 part flour, 1 part bird seed, 3 parts corn meal, 1 part peanut butter and 1 part shortening. The best way to mix this is with your hands! Make a picture recipe to have on the worktable so they can do this independently. This mixture can be put in mesh bags (onion or orange) or on pinecones. Hang the mesh bags and pine cones from the trees with yarn. Tree branch feeders can be hung with a hook that will fit over a tree branch. Go on a walk and hang up your feeders. Watch and listen for birds! (Peanut butter can be left out of the recipe if any of the students are allergic to it.)

Activity: Winter Mural

Materials: winter mural that includes pond, woods, prairie, trees with holes; animal cards with pictures of hawk, blue jay, woodpecker, mouse, squirrel, woodchuck, beaver, raccoon, skunk, weasel, fox, rabbit, deer, frog, salamander, toad, snake, turtle, butterfly, honeybee, etc.

Procedure: Each student takes a turn choosing an animal card and should tape it to the winter mural in an appropriate habitat for that animal and explain why that place was chosen (availability of food and/or shelter, etc.) Designate a place on the mural for hibernating animals (i.e. frogs will hibernate at the bottom of the pond, turtles will hibernate underground) and for migrating animals (i.e. a corner of the sky for birds that migrate and monarch butterflies that fly to Mexico).

Selected Resources:

- Acorn Naturalists: Resources for the Trail and Classroom. To order this educational resource catalogue for environmental and science education call 1-800-422-8886. To look at these resources on-line go to <http://www.acornnaturalists.com>.
- LaChapelle, Delores, and Janet Bourque. Earth Festivals: Seasonal Celebrations for Everyone Young and Old. Silverton, CO: Finn Hill Arts, 1976.
- Lingelbach, Jenepher, ed. Hands-On Nature Activities. Woodstock, VT: Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 1986.
- Sheehan, Kathryn, and Mary Waidner. Earth Child: Games, Stories, Activities, Experiments and Ideas About Living Lightly on Planet Earth. Tulsa: Council Oak Books, 1991.
- Stokes, Donald and Lillian Stokes. A Guide to Nature in Winter. Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1998.

Selected Stories:

Bauer, Caroline F. Midnight Snowman. New York: Atheneum, 1987.

Berger, Melvin and Gilda Winter. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2005

Falconer, Elizabeth, and Sara Coleridge. January Brings the Snow: A Seasonal Hide and Seek. London: Orchard Books, 1989.

Singer, Marilyn. Turtle in July. London: Macmillan Pub. Co., 1989. (Animals' viewpoint of seasons)

Strichartz, Naomi. The Wisewoman's Sacred Wheel of the Year. Spencer, NY: Cranehill Press, 1988.

Yolen, Jane. Owl Moon. New York: Philomel Books. 1987